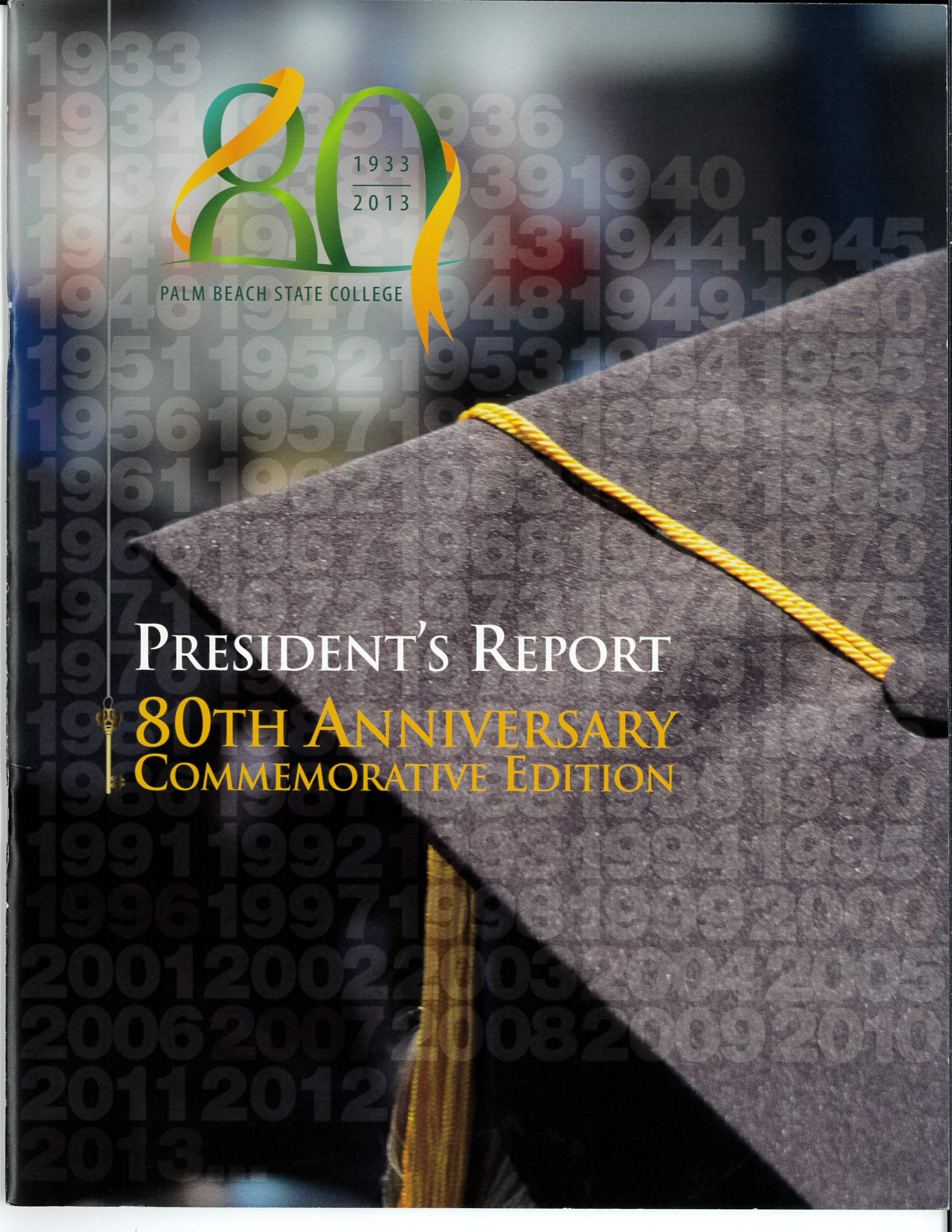

President's Report

80th Anniversary Commemorative Edition

80
1933
2013
PALM BEACH STATE COLLEGE

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A Rich History, A Limitless Future

Palm Beach Junior College, Florida's first public community college, opened its doors in 1933, launched by a small group determined to provide local higher education access. Through the years, the College has expanded in mission, programs and reach, yet it is still focused on providing the community with the critical "open door" to education and the opportunities that come with it.

Commitment, persistence and dedication are common features interwoven throughout the history of Palm Beach State College. The characters, initiatives and events that have shaped the College over the decades create a fascinating tapestry, and the story is still unfolding.

Whether you are a community member, alumnus or friend, I invite you to learn more of the College story through this commemorative publication. As we celebrate our 80th anniversary throughout 2013, please know that our students, faculty and staff appreciate and honor the enduring support from this great community that we serve.

Dennis P. Gallon, Ph.D.

President, Palm Beach State College

PALM BEACH STATE COLLEGE

1930-1939

During the 1930s, students and faculty were a tight-knit group, studying in borrowed facilities on the Palm Beach High School campus in downtown West Palm Beach.

The Seeds of an Enduring Institution are Sown Amid Economic Chaos

Howell Watkins probably had no idea what lay in store for him when he was named the principal of Palm Beach High School in late July of 1933. The 38-year-old Watkins, a graduate of Emory University, had spent the previous ten years as principal of Ft. Myers High School and before that had held a number of teaching jobs in Georgia. He saw the move to a more populated area and a larger school as an advance to his career.

At the time, Watkins was more fortunate than most to not only advance in a career path, but also to have a job at all. The country was in the depths of the Great Depression, with unemployment hovering at 25 percent. Promising "a 'New Deal' for the American people," President Franklin Roosevelt and the 73rd Congress passed a flurry of legislation focusing on relief, recovery and reform in an attempt to right the sinking ship that was the national economy. But it would take time for those measures to take effect.

Making It Happen

With jobs scarce and money tight, high school students had few options after graduation. College was a dream many of them aspired to, but given the economic circumstances, it was only a dream. There was no institute of higher learning in Palm Beach County. So county Superintendent of Public Instruction Joe Youngblood and Howell Watkins joined forces to establish a school providing a postsecondary education for students financially unable to attend college outside the county.

Collaborating with a coalition of ordinary citizens, local civic and business leaders, and colleagues at the University of Florida and the Florida State College for Women, a college-level curriculum was developed, and the two educators co-founded Palm Beach Junior College in October 1933. It was the first public junior college in the state of Florida.

Three rooms in a small, two-story storage building next to the high school on Gardenia Street were quickly converted into classrooms for the 41 incoming freshmen. Classes began on Nov. 14, 1933, tuition was free and courses included languages, math, history, biology, art and physical education. The seven instructors, all teachers at Palm Beach High, taught at the College part time, donating their services.

In June 1936 the College graduated its first class of three students. In September of that year, Dr. John I. Leonard succeeded Youngblood as county superintendent and was named the College's first president; Watkins was its first dean of students. A year later the state Legislature passed an act enabling the county to put money into a junior college budget. The College operated under the auspices of the Palm Beach County Board of Public Instruction.

The curriculum offered two paths for students — an Associate in Arts degree or a Certificate of Graduation. The College had been approved by the Florida Association of Colleges and Schools, and both state universities granted conditional credit to transfer students. By the end of the decade, over 100 students were taking classes, and the College had expanded to take over the whole Gardenia Street building.

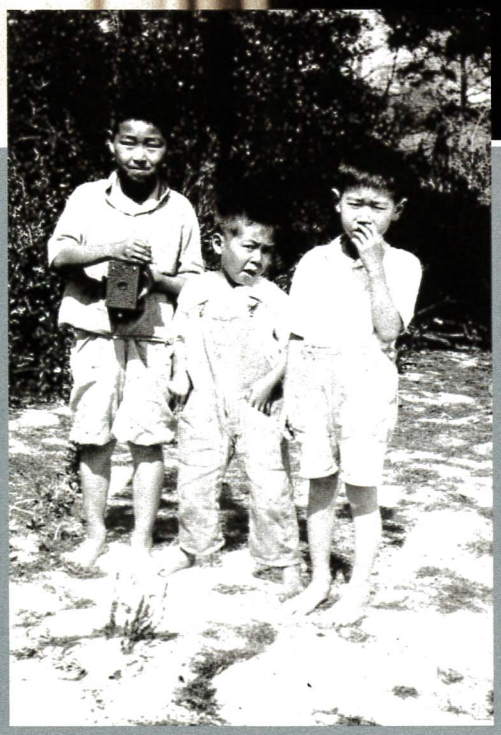
Howell Watkins

Joe Youngblood

1931—The State of Florida approves Palm Beach Junior College to become the first public two-year college.

1936—"Rebels" is the nickname chosen for the College's sports teams.

1939—*The Beachcomber*, the College's student newspaper, publishes its first edition. A student-held contest produced the name, selected over *The Coconut* and *Palm Beach Comber*.



Frank Kamiya (left), age 10, with his brother and cousin in Boca Raton.

1930-1939 Spotlight

Frank Kamiya

In Palm Beach Junior College's first graduating class, Frank Kamiya stood out. The 1936 graduating class was comprised of three students: Frank Kamiya, Charlotte Cross and Virginia Cunningham. Not only was he the only male in the group, he was Japanese, a rarity back in what was mostly an all-white student body.

Kamiya was born in 1915 in the Japanese immigrant colony of Yamato near Boca Raton. The colony was founded by his uncle, Jo Sakai, in 1905, and its settlers grew winter vegetables and pineapples. He attended grammar school in a one-room schoolhouse until its closing in 1922, then continued his education with other Yamato children in Boca Raton and Delray Beach. He was a four-year starter on the Delray Beach High School basketball team, graduating in 1933. His skill in basketball led to a scholarship offer from Lakeland College, which he turned down to attend the University of Florida.

Financial reasons led him to transfer to Palm Beach Junior College. After graduating from PBJC, he returned to Gainesville, graduating in 1937 with a teaching certificate and a degree in health and physical education, with plans to become a teacher. A job as a cook on the university campus changed his career trajectory, and he pursued a career as a chef, specializing in Italian cuisine. At the height of his success, he was considered one of the best Italian chefs in the southeast United States.

Our Song

"Alma Mater"
In 1939, Edna Wilson, Alice Hayes and Mary Jane McDonald penned the College's song, sung to the tune of "God Bless America."

Alma Mater

Hail! Junior College!
School of our dreams.
May you guide us, stand beside us,
Through the night may your light guide our schemes
First as freshman, then as sophomores
Dear to us you'll ever be!
Fountain of wisdom, our faith's in thee!
Hail Alma Mater, we'll loyal be!

1940-1949

Seeking acceptance among its peers and a home for its students

Just as the county was climbing out of the black pit of despair brought on by the Great Depression, new anxieties mounted as the dark clouds of world war began to loom across the globe. In 1937, Japanese troops invaded China and two years later World War II began with Nazi Germany's invasion of Poland. By the end of 1940, the Axis powers – Germany, Japan and Italy – controlled large parts of Europe, Africa and Asia.

The College had registered 117 students in the 1939-1940 school year, the first time enrollment reached triple figures. By that time, the educational mission of the College had been defined, refined and codified to reflect five basic principles: to offer two years of acceptable college-level coursework, provide individual attention to students through small class sizes, give students an option to affordably attain a college degree, help young people develop

leadership skills and experience the social benefits of college while living at home, and train students to advance to institutions of higher learning.

Seeking to put a professional stamp of approval on the institution and curriculum, President John I. Leonard and Dean Howell Watkins journeyed to Atlanta in April 1940 to petition for accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. While the trip was unsuccessful, later that spring Palm Beach Junior College presented diplomas to 30 sophomores—its largest graduation class to date. When classes resumed in October of that year, students were welcomed back with redecorated lounges, a 4,000-volume library and renovated offices.

"I believe junior colleges are the best thing that ever happened to education in Florida and the United States," said Watkins in a newspaper interview. "They are the keys that educators have been searching for. Junior colleges are filling the niche that gaped widely in our educational system."

Accredited and Growing

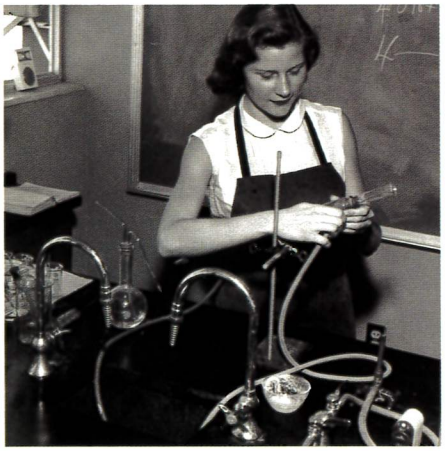
In December 1942, Palm Beach Junior College finally received the recognition it had long sought. The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools granted PBJC full accreditation, to go with its accreditation from the Florida State Department of Education. Four of the high school's buildings were added to PBJC's "campus": a vocational education building, a workshop and two wings of the auditorium.

With the country's entry into World War II, the College's tempo of growth slowed and enrollment dropped sharply as college-age men joined the armed services. The impact of the war was reflected by the institution of trade courses – sheet metal work, auto mechanics, boat construction and welding – providing concentrated instruction to allow students to find immediate employment to help build "the Arsenal of Democracy."

At the war's end in 1945, PBJC was approved by the state Department of Education to train veterans under the G.I. Bill and was soon overrun with returning service personnel. Gov. Millard Caldwell and the state Legislature instituted the Educational Minimum Foundation Program, designed to increase funding to rural schools; Palm Beach Junior College became the first public junior college to participate in the program. The Board of Public Instruction acquired Morrison Field, a 21-acre parcel of land in the fall of 1947. The property was a former military airbase, deactivated at the end of the war.

By the end of the decade, with a record 350 students, Palm Beach Junior College had finally found a location to grow both its academic offerings and enrollment.

"Mr. Junior College"



1940-1949 Spotlight

John I. Leonard

John I. Leonard was born in 1886 in Joliet, Ill., where his father managed the local bank. He attended Lombard College in nearby Galesburg and later became an osteopathic physician in Joliet. Leonard's career as a doctor was cut short when he sustained a hand injury during World War I.

He went back to college, earning a master's degree from the University of Florida and later received an honorary doctorate in education from Florida Southern College. In 1925 Leonard moved to Palm Beach with his wife and son, worked in real estate and served on the town council and county zoning board. In 1936 he was elected county superintendent of public schools, succeeding Joe Youngblood, a position he held until 1948.

While Youngblood and Howell Watkins, principal of Palm Beach High School, are credited with co-founding Palm Beach Junior College, Leonard was the College's greatest steward. He served as PBJC's first president and led the quest for the College to receive full accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

Leonard believed an institution of higher learning should provide opportunities for its students to grow academically, vocationally and spiritually in preparation for their place in the business world and the community. He led the College through tumultuous times – from its Depression-era beginnings in a converted storage building on the grounds of Palm Beach High School, its "orphan years" at the Morrison Field and Lake Park locations, to a permanent campus near the shores of Lake Osborne in Lake Worth. Leonard's tireless efforts and his devotion to PBJC earned him the moniker "Mr. Junior College."

1941—Palm Beach Junior College becomes a member of the American Association of Junior Colleges.

1941—Phil Glancy is hired as the first full-time coach for PBJC athletics.

1942—The Civil Aeronautics Authority approves the College for training students under the C.A.A. War Training Act.

1944—The PBJC Alumni Association is founded July 20.

1946—The student yearbook, *The Galleon*, makes its debut.

1950-1959
Wandering & Wondering

Lake Park City Hall

The post-World War II era ushered in an economic boom. Veterans and their families moved into "Levittowns," large tract housing developments outside of cities, leading to the rise of suburbia. They filled those homes with new appliances that were unavailable during the war years; one new appliance gave birth to a new medium in entertainment and communication – the television.

The geopolitical landscape was changing as well. The Soviet Union and China replaced Germany and Japan as our ideological and moral enemies, as an "Iron Curtain" descended across Eastern Europe and Communism threatened to spread to Southeast Asia. A new arms race began, this time with atomic weapons, and a "Cold War" ensued. Nuclear bomb tests, fallout shelters and "duck and cover" exercises became the new normal.

For the first time since its inception in 1933, Palm Beach Junior College finally had a campus to call its own. The College's new campus was a former air base, Morrison Field. Compared to its previous confines, the 21-acre site must have been a slice of heaven to students, faculty and staff. PBJC now had modern, well-equipped laboratories and classrooms, a more spacious library, a separate administration building, student dormitories, athletic facilities (including a swimming pool), a chapel – even an on-campus home for the College's president.

The new quarters also made room for a larger student body and an increase in faculty members. The 1949-1950 academic year opened with a record enrollment of 350 students. With the new space, administrators predicted that number would nearly double the following year. The sky was the limit, it seemed.

Then it all came crashing down.

On the Move

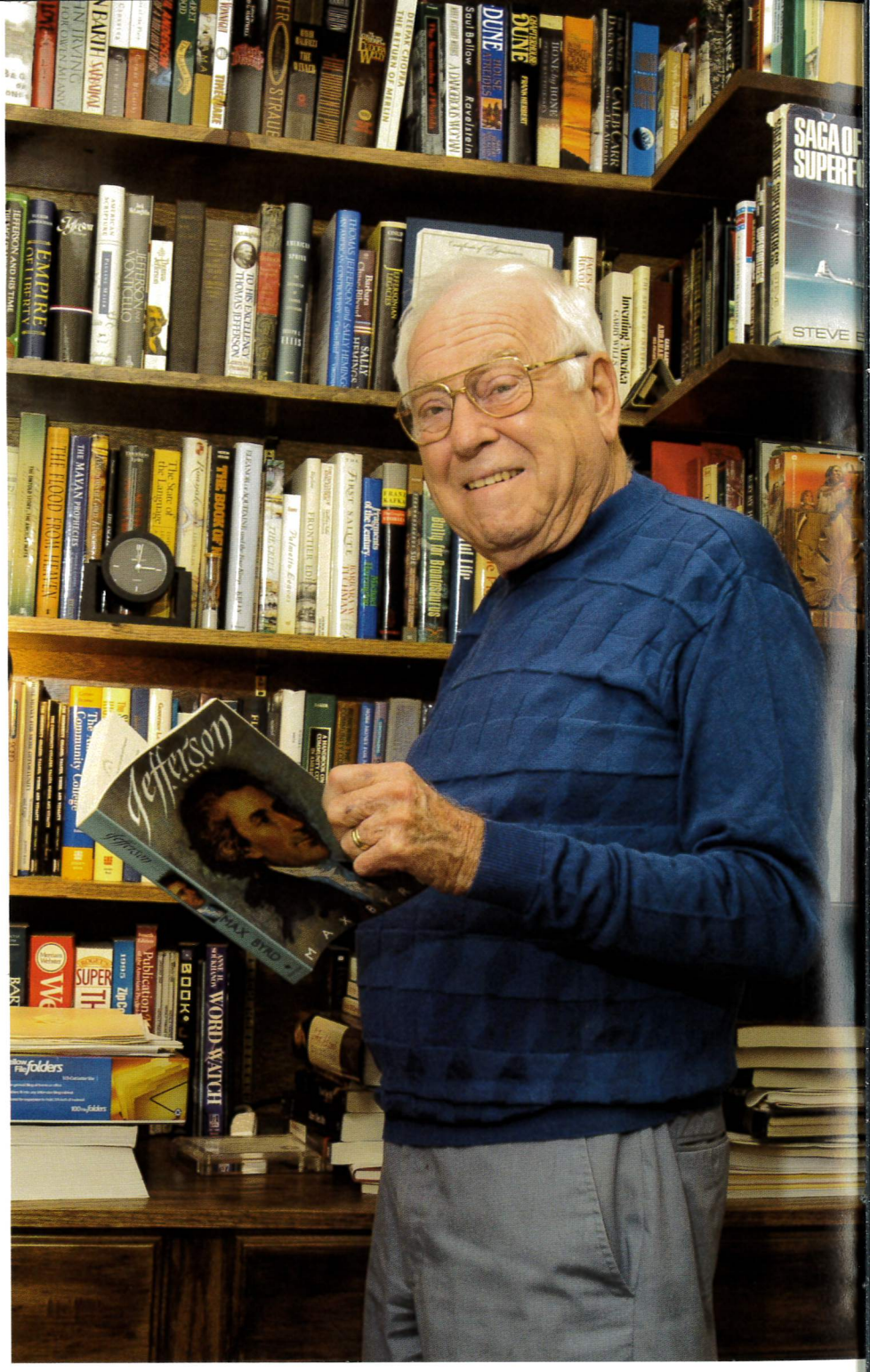
On "Black Wednesday," May 9, 1951, the school board informed the College that Morrison Field was to be reactivated because of the Korean War. The "Little Orphan College," as the local press dubbed PBJC, relocated yet again, this time to Lake Park. The former city hall building was offered to the College rent-free for three years. The student lounge was a space that once housed fire engines, the chemistry lab was the former jail, and the courtroom was converted to a library. While larger than the Gardenia Street building, PBJC was forced to slash its administrative staff and faculty, and enrollment shrank to fewer than 200 students.

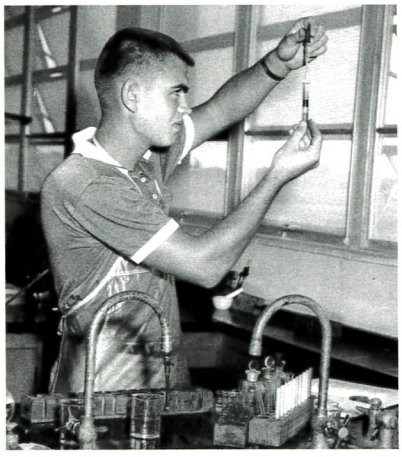
This gypsy-like existence continued for another five years, until the county donated a 114-acre parcel of land west of Lake Worth. The state Legislature, acting on a bill introduced by Senator Russell Morrow to increase funding for existing junior colleges, allocated over $1 million for construction of the campus. Ground was broken in April 1956, and later that year the first of five buildings was completed.

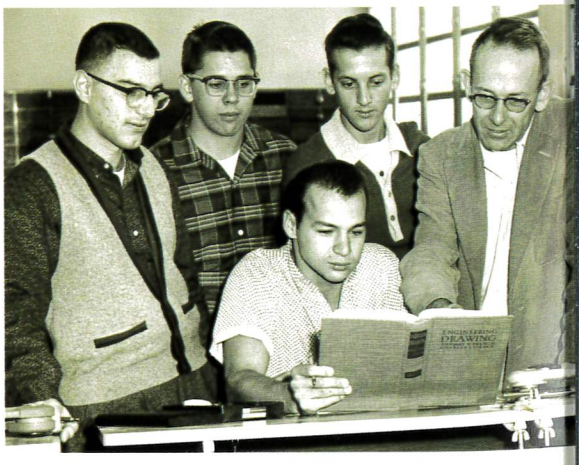
With the opening of the new campus, enrollment soared to 475 students, and more faculty and general education classes were added to the curriculum. In 1958, John I. Leonard retired and Dr. Harold C. Manor became PBJC's second president. The College celebrated its silver anniversary with a permanent campus on the shores of Lake Osborne, and enrollment topped 1,000 for the first time.

In 1956 ground was broken in Lake Worth for Palm Beach Junior College's first permanent campus.

"The Father of the Community College System"







1950–1959 Spotlight

James L. Wattenbarger

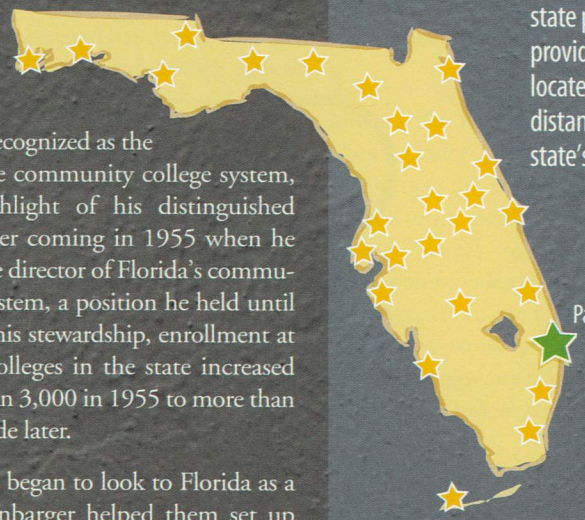
While some educators believed that junior colleges, in their earliest incarnations, were nothing more than an extension of high school or a place where young people not cut out for academia could learn a skilled trade, James L. Wattenbarger saw the bigger picture, years before his peers. A native of Cleveland, Tenn., Wattenbarger was a 1941 graduate of Palm Beach Junior College and earned his bachelor's degree from the University of Florida in 1943. He then went on to serve as a navigator in the Army Air Corp during World War II, earning an Air Medal and Distinguished Flying Cross.

After finishing his tour of duty, Wattenbarger returned to UF to begin work on his doctorate. During his graduate studies, he was selected to provide research for a report to the state Legislature on the state of the handful of schools that were Florida's junior colleges. Recalling his own positive experiences as a student at PBJC, Wattenbarger eagerly set to work, churning out a highly-detailed report that became his doctoral thesis.

In Wattenbarger's dissertation, he outlined his vision for a cohesive, modernized community college system in which higher education was open to everyone, regardless of age, social class or location. He proposed the establishment of community colleges within commuting distance of every Floridian, with open enrollment and flexible schedules. Using Wattenbarger's report as a template, Florida began to reshape its community college system.

He is widely recognized as the "father" of the community college system, with the highlight of his distinguished academic career coming in 1955 when he was named the director of Florida's community college system, a position he held until 1967. Under his stewardship, enrollment at community colleges in the state increased from fewer than 3,000 in 1955 to more than 75,000 a decade later.

As other states began to look to Florida as a model, Wattenbarger helped them set up their own community college systems. In all, he served as a consultant or played a role in the development of systems in 34 states.

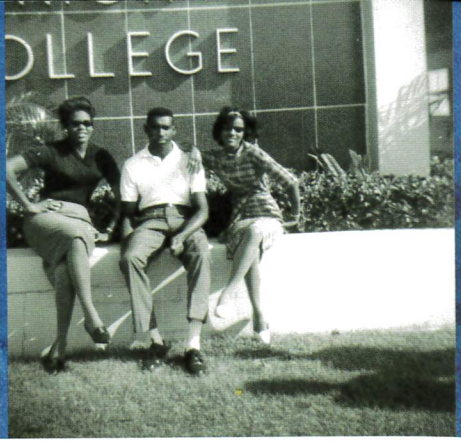


"The Community/Junior College in Florida's Future" report recommended a state plan that would provide 28 junior colleges located within commuting distance of 99% of the state's population.

1952—New evening division classes are introduced, offering adult education programs.

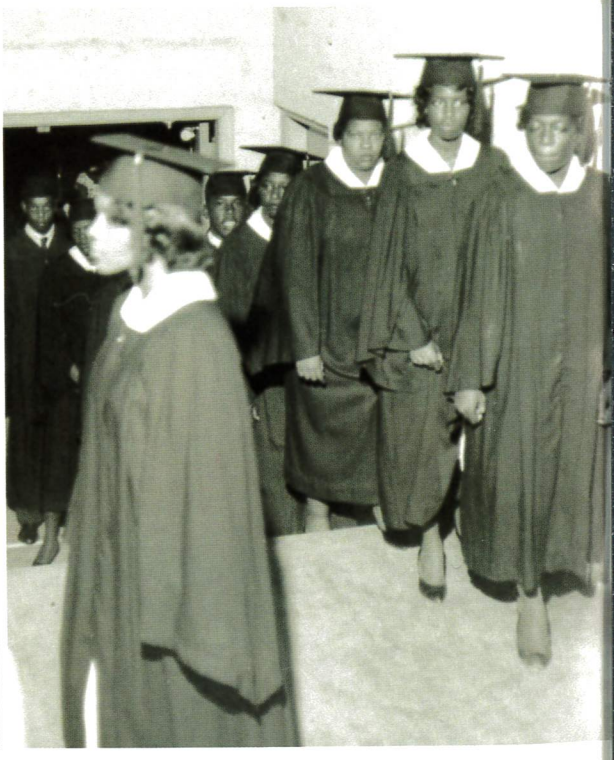
1956—Burt "Buddy" Reynolds makes his acting debut in the play "Outward Bound."

1959—*Media*, the College's literary magazine, is launched.



1960-1969

One for All



In 1954 the Supreme Court ruled on Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka, a landmark decision that declared "separate but equal" educational facilities for white and black students was unconstitutional. Soon after the ruling, the Florida Legislature passed a resolution declaring the Supreme Court's decision null and void. However, Gov. LeRoy Collins, realizing his state was fast becoming a popular vacation destination for people of all races, refused to sign the bill, declaring that the Brown decision was the law of the land and the state must adhere to the ruling.

As PBJC celebrated its silver anniversary in 1958, Roosevelt Junior College, one of eleven junior colleges for African-American students established by the state after the Brown decision, opened its doors on March 7. Britton Sayles was named president of RJC; classes were held at night at Roosevelt High School, where Sayles also served as principal. Construction of a building for RJC was completed in 1959. The status quo, it seemed, was maintained.

Turning Tides

There were nearly 2,000 students enrolled at PBJC at the beginning of the 1960s, almost all of them white. The College enrolled its first African-American student, Mary Warren, in 1960. At the time the only way for black students to gain admission to PBJC was to apply as a transfer student from Roosevelt Junior College. In the summer of 1963, six RJC students wanting to transfer to PBJC were denied admission on the grounds that they lived closer to Roosevelt, and RJC offered them comparable courses.

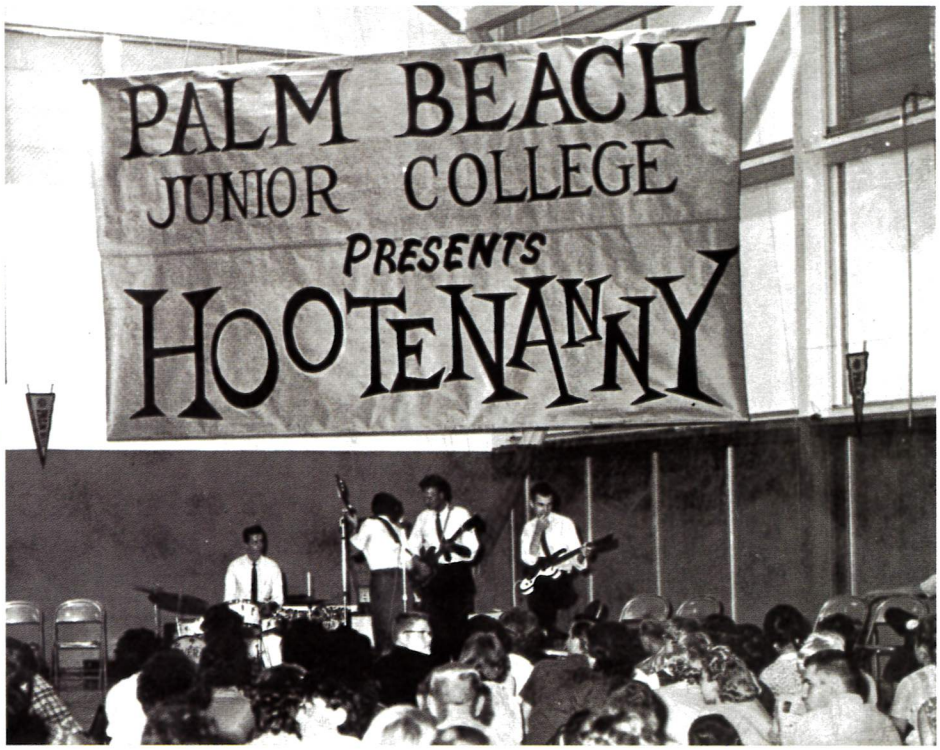
The six students and their parents took the Palm Beach County school board to federal court, claiming discrimination. The West Palm Beach Community Relations Committee offered to mediate the dispute between the two parties. A report prepared for the committee compared courses between Palm Beach Junior College and Roosevelt Junior College using the 1963-64 catalogs as guides. The report cited glaring differences in both quality and quantity of coursework offered at each school.

Confronted with the truth and seeing the tide of history slowly turning against them, the school board voted unanimously to drop all barriers to black student enrollment at PBJC. Allowed to choose between the two schools for the first time, the influx of black students pushed PBJC enrollment to over 3,500; in contrast, Roosevelt Junior College's enrollment dropped to a little over 200 students.

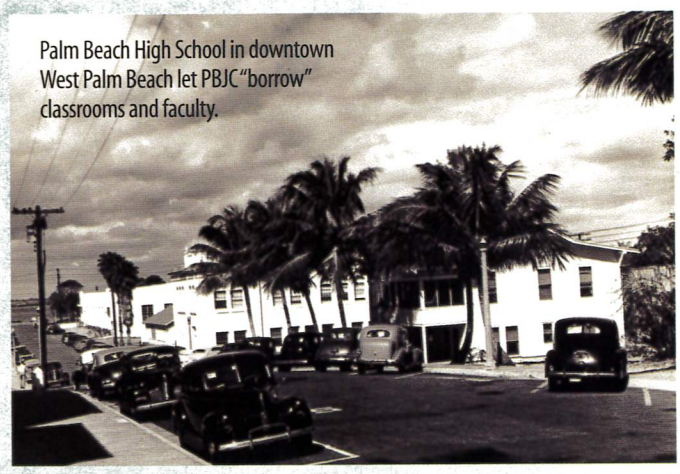
In June 1964 the U.S. Senate voted for the passage of the Civil Rights Act, making racial discrimination in public places illegal. It also required employers to provide equal opportunities; federal funding would be cut off if there was evidence of discrimination. The federal government set a deadline of September 1966 for compliance with the new law.

Roosevelt Junior College and Palm Beach Junior College merged in June 1965. PBJC became the first school in the county with an integrated faculty. However, of the 18 faculty members at RJC, only six – three classroom instructors, two librarians and one administrator – transferred to PBJC.

Another significant change loomed on the horizon that also affected Florida's junior colleges. Under a law passed by the state Legislature in early 1968, junior colleges moved from being governed by their local school boards to governance by locally autonomous boards of trustees appointed by the governor to serve without compensation. The boards would set policy, guide operations of the colleges and administer the collection and expenditure of funds.



Palm Beach State College | Historical Timeline



Palm Beach High School in downtown West Palm Beach let PBJC "borrow" classrooms and faculty.

1931—The State of Florida approves the plan to launch Palm Beach Junior College as the state's first public two-year college.

1933—Palm Beach Junior College opens on Nov. 14 with 41 students.

1936—Dr. John I. Leonard is named PBJC's first president.

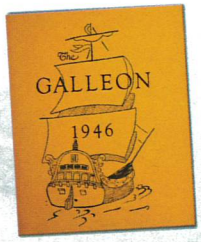
1936—"Rebels" is the nickname chosen for the College's sports teams.

1939—*The Beachcomber*, the College's student newspaper, publishes its first edition.

1941—PBJC becomes a member of the American Association of Junior Colleges.

1942—The Civil Aeronautics Authority approves the College for training students under the C.A.A. War Training Act.

1944—The PBJC Alumni Association is founded July 20.



1946—The student yearbook, *The Galleon*, makes its debut.

Burt Reynolds, Watson B. Duncan III and Monte Markham

1952—New evening division classes are introduced, offering adult education programs.

1955—Palm Beach County donates 114 acres in Lake Worth to establish a permanent campus. The state gives $1 million for buildings.

1956—Burt "Buddy" Reynolds makes his acting debut in the play "Outward Bound."

1958—Dr. Harold C. Manor becomes the second College president, directing extraordinary growth in enrollment.

1959—*Media*, the College's literary magazine, is launched.

1960—The first African-American student, Mary Warren, enrolls at PBJC.

1963—PBJC opens its doors to all African-American students.

1965—All-black Roosevelt Junior College merges with PBJC.

1930 1940 1950 1960 1970

The Technical Education Center, a LEED Platinum certified building on the Belle Glade campus, opened in 2010.

1971—PBJC begins offering night classes in facilities borrowed from Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton.

1972—In Belle Glade, courses were first offered in a variety of temporary classroom spaces before a permanent location was established in 1977.

1978—Dr. Edward M. Eissey becomes the third president of Palm Beach Junior College.

1980—Elisabeth Erling is appointed vice president of special services, the first female vice president at the College.

1982—The Palm Beach Gardens campus is established on PGA Blvd.

1983—PBJC South is established on a permanent site leased by FAU in Boca Raton.

1983—The Dolly Hand Cultural Arts Center opens in Belle Glade.

1986—The Watson B. Duncan III Theatre is dedicated on the Lake Worth campus.

1988—PBJC is renamed Palm Beach Community College.

1990—Palm Beach Gardens campus is named the Edward M. Eissey campus.

1994—The Eissey Campus Theatre opens on the Palm Beach Gardens campus.

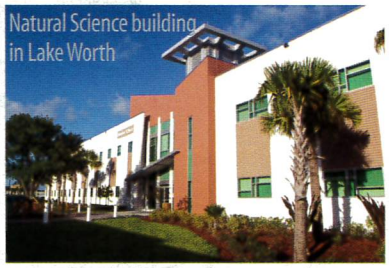
1997—Dr. Dennis P. Gallon becomes PBCC's fourth president.

2006—PBCC's Career Pathways curriculum model wins the national Bellwether Award.

2008—The Natural Science building adds 50,000 square feet of classrooms and laboratories to the Lake Worth campus.

2009—First baccalaureate level courses are offered.

2010—Belle Glade doubles its teaching space with the opening of the Technical Education Center (above).



2010—On Jan. 12, the name of the College officially changes to Palm Beach State College.

2011—First bachelor's degrees are awarded to 122 graduates of the Supervision and Management B.A.S. program.

2011—Palm Beach State College Commencement Ceremony is webcast live for the first time.

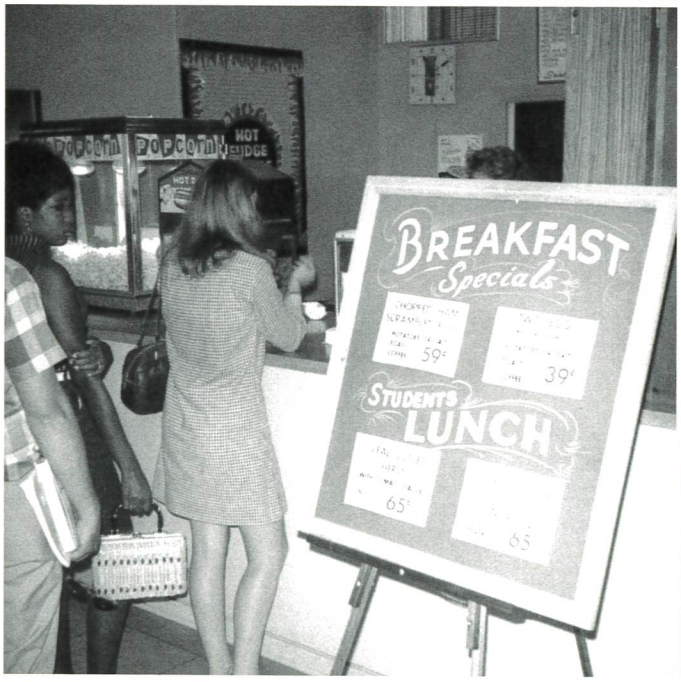
2012—College launches International Education Center to expand global collaborations.

2012—Students vote to name the Panther mascot "Palmer."

2013—State study shows Palm Beach State pumps $1.1 billion annually into the local economy.

1980 1990 2000 2010 2020

HERE - SOON
PALM BEACH
JUNIOR COLLEGE
NORTH CAMPUS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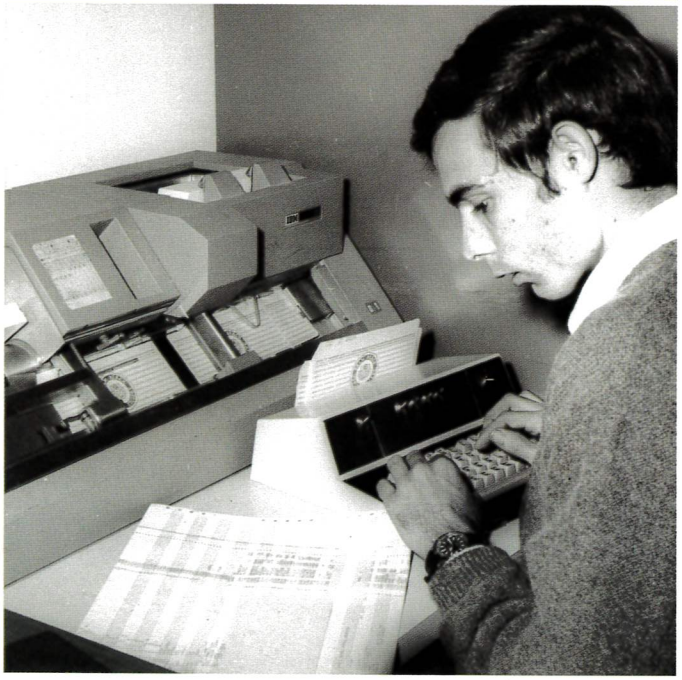
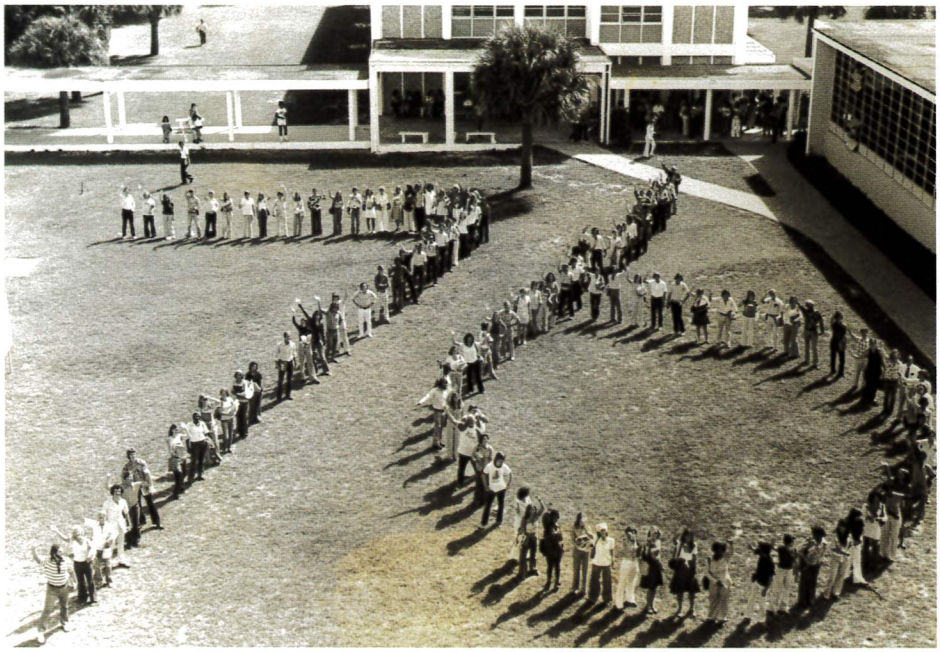




With Roots Established, the College's Branches Spread

"Manifest Destiny" was the term used to describe America's expansion from the shores of the Atlantic westward to the Pacific coast. The idea of a country united "from sea to shining sea" was romanticized as our nation's birthright. On a smaller, but no less ambitious scale, Palm Beach Junior College sought to expand to all four corners of Palm Beach County.

In the summer of 1972, the Belle Glade National Armory building was renovated into classroom space, and on Aug. 28, PBJC Belle Glade opened its doors to 650 students. Classes were also held in the Glades Central High School annex and the correctional facility. Administration offices were in the north wing of Glades General Hospital. Space was so limited that the campus library kept its books in cardboard boxes. The push was on for more permanent quarters.

Two years later the College acquired a 40-acre parcel of land from the state Internal Improvement Board. Unfortunately, there was no highway access. The U.S. Sugar Corporation then stepped in, swapping a parcel of land near the intersection of SR 80 and SR 715 for the land given to PBJC. The Sugar Cane Growers Cooperative of Florida followed with a $76,000 donation for a building fund. In June 1977, ground was broken for PBJC's first permanent satellite campus.

Open house ceremonies for the new campus were held Feb. 12, 1978. The 48,000-square-foot complex had 14 classrooms, three laboratories, two conference rooms, a bookstore, administration offices, a student lounge and a library.

Meanwhile, President Harold Manor and the Board of Trustees had purchased a parcel of land in Palm Beach Gardens in the 1960s from John D. MacArthur, the billionaire who owned much of the land in northern Palm Beach County (and was the founder of Palm Beach Gardens). It was an investment in the College's future growth; the money for the land purchase was available, funds to build on the site were not.

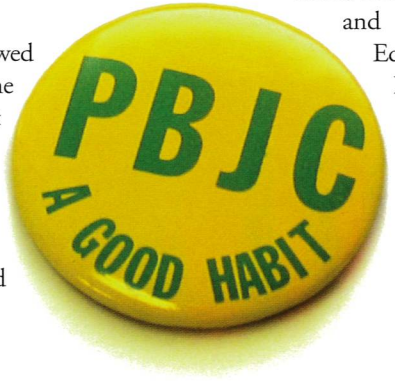
Continuing education classes were held in various locations in the north county, but it wasn't until 1973 that the College's first northern county employee, Ann Dorosh, occupied a portable building near the future campus. That year PBJC held eight evening classes in classrooms borrowed from Palm Beach Gardens High School.

Florida Atlantic University allowed the upstart campus to use some of its classrooms on 45th Street for day classes. A small library was started, and student enrollment topped 500, with 81 courses offered. By 1979 the state Legislature appropriated nearly $5 million for a classroom complex, administration building and maintenance structure.

PBJC's foray into southern Palm Beach County consisted of a few classes held at night in the Alexander D. Henderson University School on Florida Atlantic University's Boca Raton campus in the spring of 1971. A couple of years later, a more formalized agreement between the two schools provided classroom and administrative space for PBJC.

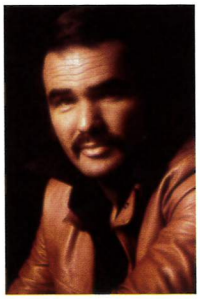
The College was allowed the use of six classrooms, FAU's pool and physical education facilities, cafeteria, and office and parking space. By 1974, James Tanner was appointed coordinator of the south branch and enrollment grew to more than 330 students. In 1977, four full-time faculty were hired.

The end of the decade ushered in an era of unprecedented growth for the College as well as a changing of the guard. On Sept. 1, 1978, in a ceremony attended by 10 college presidents, local and state dignitaries and business leaders, Dr. Edward M. Eissey became Palm Beach Junior College's third president, succeeding Dr. Harold C. Manor.

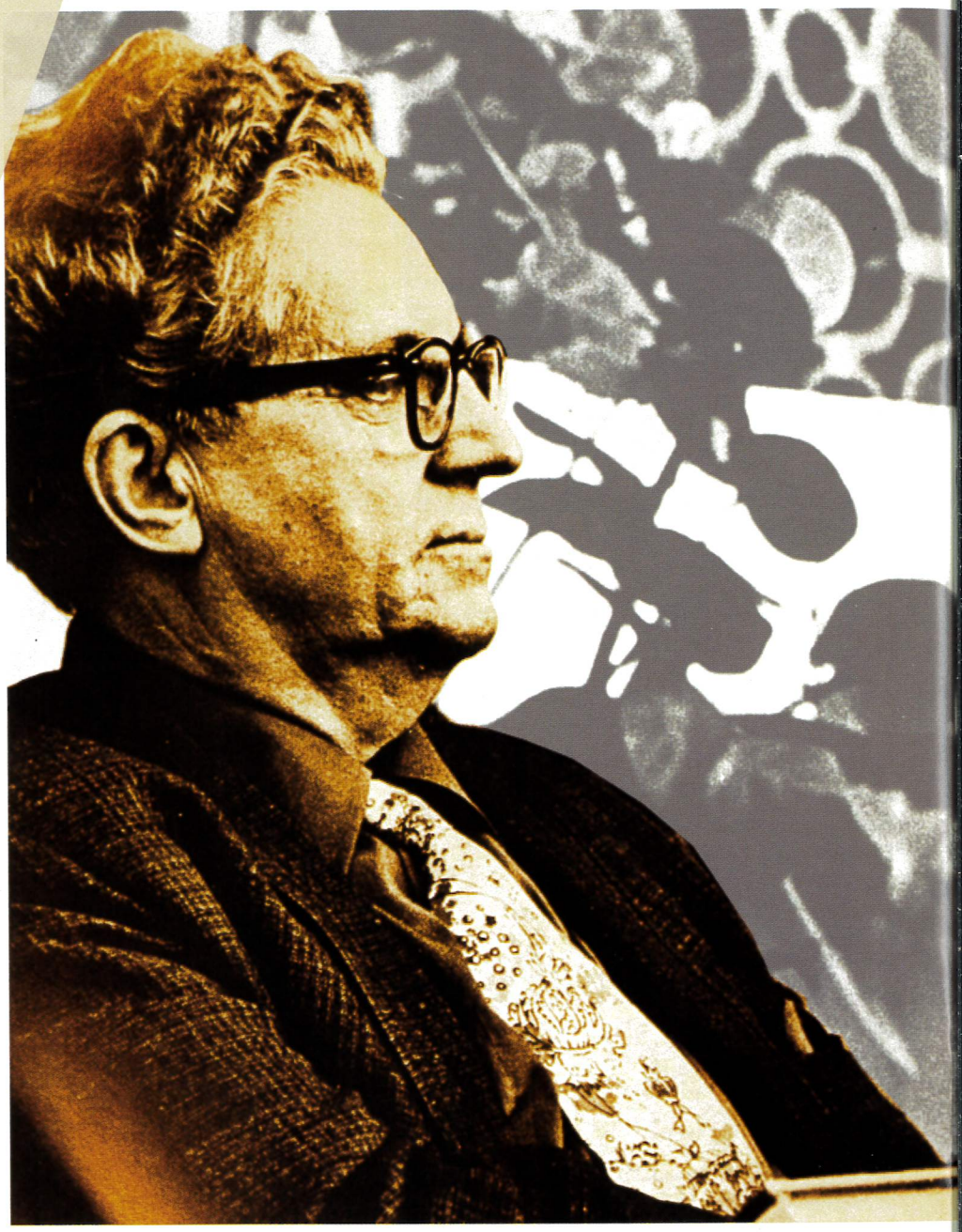


1970 - 1979 Spotlight

Watson B. Duncan III



"It's that large leprechaun's fault that I'm an actor," Burt Reynolds said of his mentor, Watson B. Duncan III. "He is and was and will always be, I think, the finest teacher in the United States."



A native of Charleston, S.C., and the son and grandson of Methodist ministers, Duncan studied at the University of South Carolina and the Shakespeare Institute at Stratford-upon-Avon. He joined the faculty at Palm Beach Junior College in 1948, teaching English, economics and political science. In later years, Duncan would concentrate his instruction to literature and drama.

His love of literature in general, and his devotion to Shakespeare in particular turned what could ordinarily be dry material in the hands of a lesser instructor into a tour-de-force classroom drama. He didn't just teach – he performed for his students.

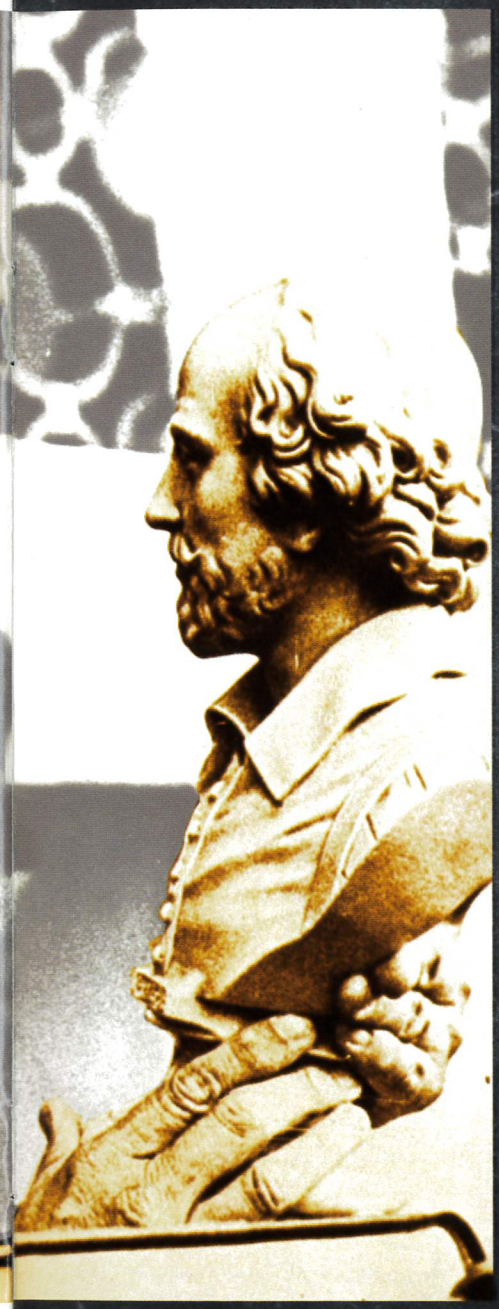
"He was the only man who could make me weep reading the great letters of Shakespeare, all the while dressed as an Easter egg," said Monte Markham, another one of Duncan's students who went on to become a professional actor.

Duncan started the theatre program in the early 1950s, and his reputation grew as a scholar who literally breathed life into his subjects. So popular were his classes – 100 or so students in most of them – that students waited up to a year to get into one of them.

His stature as an outstanding drama instructor grew to national proportions, but Duncan never considered teaching anywhere else. "Palm Beach Junior College has given me everything I wanted, both professionally and personally," he said. He met his wife, Honey, when she was a student in one of his classes in 1949.

In honor of his long and distinguished teaching career, the Watson B. Duncan III Theatre on the Lake Worth campus was dedicated in 1986.

Honey and Watson B. Duncan III



1973—The Center for Early Learning opens its doors at the Lake Worth campus with an enrollment of 22 children.

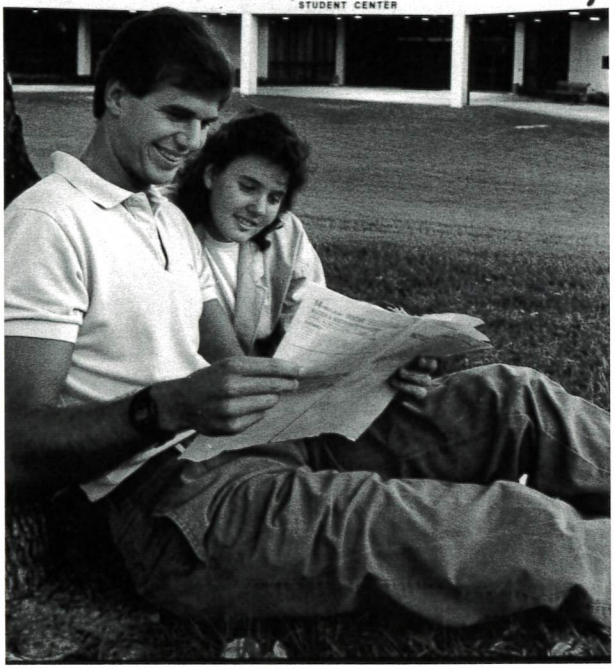
1975—Faculty members vote 101 to 72 for the United Faculty of Palm Beach Junior College to be the bargaining agent for teachers, librarians and counselors at the College.

1979—The College's yearbook, *The Galleon*, ceases publication.

1979—PBJC offers classes through "multimedia" (newspapers and television) for the first time.

Duncan, the pied piper of English literature, would proclaim Shakespeare as "the Big S" in classroom performances for his students.

1980-1989



A College for the Community

Palm Beach Junior College was showing its age in 1980. Money was desperately needed for improvements since the first building opened on its Lake Worth campus in 1956. Dr. Edward Eissey, equal parts college president and politician, began his pitch for funding shortly after taking office.

A master salesman and a gifted speaker, Eissey set about convincing local legislators to push for an ad valorem tax. The millage referendum passed the 1979 Legislature by a 56-44 vote and was added to the local March 1980 ballot.

The referendum called for a half-mill property tax increase (one half mill equaled 50 cents per $1,000 of assessed property value after exemptions) over two years; College officials estimated that $8 million in funds would be raised for capital improvements.

Push for Local Support

PBJC had not received money directly from the county since July 1968, when its governing authority shifted from the local school board to the state. The College's annual operating budget was around $12 million per year; 60 percent came from state funds, two percent from federal aid, and the rest from student tuition and special fees.

The campaign kicked off on Jan. 3, 1980, with PBJC officials and local state legislators on hand to explain the bill at a campus press conference. Eissey vowed to barnstorm the county, delivering 150 speeches in 90 days, enumerating the College's needs with a 17-minute slideshow presentation.

On March 11, 1980, county voters went to the polls. College faculty, staff and students took to the streets, waving "Vote for PBJC, Punch 139" signs on highway overpasses and at busy intersections. In the end, the referendum passed by a near two-to-one margin: 9,701 in favor with 5,104 opposed.

Building Boom

The decade kicked off a building boom on all four campuses. Bolstered by an additional $1.67 million from the state Legislature, construction began on the Palm Beach Gardens campus. The classroom and administration complex was dedicated and open for students in 1982. In 1983, the State Educational Facilities Office reported that PBJC qualified for funding for over 130,000 square feet of classrooms, laboratories and offices for its Boca Raton campus. Eleven portable buildings were installed on land leased from FAU. On the Belle Glade campus, the doors to the 500-seat Dolly Hand Cultural Arts Center opened, and the venue quickly became the crown jewel of the western communities, named in honor of Glades resident and former trustee Frances R. "Dolly" Hand.

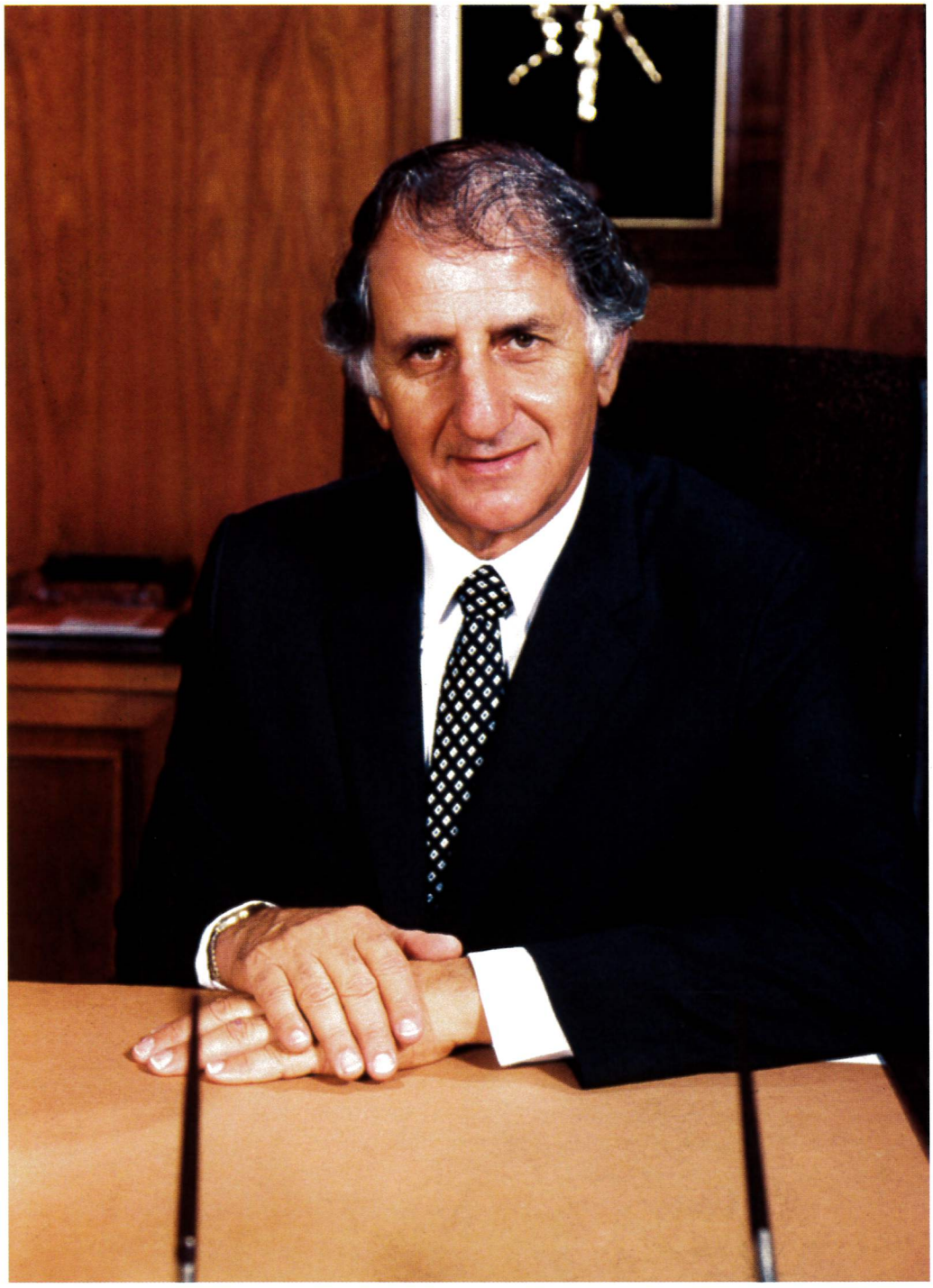
Enrollment topped 10,000 students for the first time, and students were able to register for classes at kiosks in shopping malls or by computers at local area high schools. For the thousands of senior citizens making Palm Beach County their home, PBJC's continuing education division unveiled the Institute of New Dimensions, advocating lifelong learning for retirees.

Junior No More

A philosophical change was coming as well.

For years there was sentiment among the state's 28 two-year colleges that "junior" did not adequately describe the role they played in their respective communities. The Florida Association of Public Junior Colleges (FAPJC) pushed for legislation making "junior" and "community" synonymous in state law. Once passed, Lake–Sumter Junior College was the first to make the change, and soon other junior colleges followed suit.

In June 1988, the Board of Trustees approved changing the name from Palm Beach Junior College to Palm Beach Community College, "to more accurately reflect the broad base of community programs and services provided by the College."



VOTE FOR
PBJC

ED EISSEY
Left Fielder

Edward M. Eissey

If there was one person who personified the College, it was Edward Michael Eissey. Born in Boston, the son of Lebanese immigrants, Eissey enrolled at Palm Beach Junior College, where he played left field on the baseball team and was voted Mr. Palm Beach Junior College in 1946. (His future wife, Faye Johns, was named Miss PBJC the same year.) After graduating in 1950 from Florida State University – where Eissey was student body president – he returned to Palm Beach County.

Eissey worked for 46 years in education, serving at every level. His first teaching job was at Palm Beach High School, and he soon was principal at Greenacres Elementary, Howell Watkins Junior High and Palm Beach Gardens High. Eissey then became an area supervisor for the county school district.

In 1973 he was appointed to the College's District Board of Trustees, was made vice-chairman in 1974 and later chairman. Eissey was named vice president of the Palm Beach Gardens campus in 1975. When Dr. Harold Manor announced his retirement, the Board of Trustees chose Eissey as the College's third president. He had the distinction of being the first junior college president at the same school where he was an alumnus and a former trustee.

Almost immediately, Eissey made a profound impact at the College, campaigning in the Legislature and the community for a two-year temporary property tax increase for capital improvements at the main campus. Out on the stump the most frequently asked question was, "I don't attend PBJC, what's in it for me?" Eissey had an answer.

"Someone who served you today received training at Palm Beach Junior College," he would say. "A nurse, policeman, real estate broker, dental hygienist – you cannot live in Palm Beach County without being touched by PBJC."

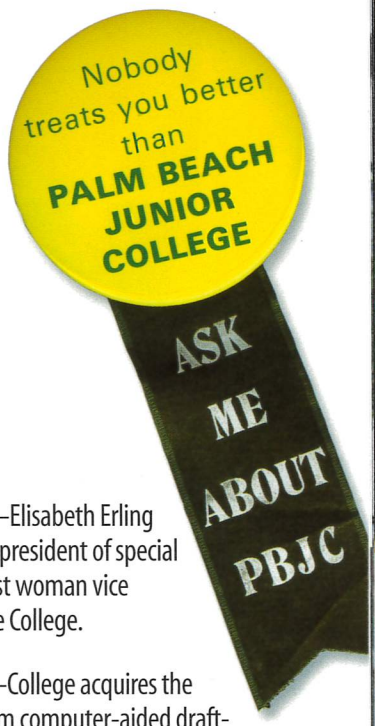
The measure passed, netting the College nearly $9 million for what Eissey called "the three Rs – repairs, renovations and remodeling."

Vigorous expansion of campus facilities, new and innovative educational programs, increased cooperation with business and industry and closer ties with local and state governments were the hallmark of Eissey's administration.

"When Ed gets something on his mind, he persists and persists and persists until you yield just to get rid of him," said Phil Lewis, former state senate president.

Later, as he made the rounds in Tallahassee seeking yet more funding for the College, this time for satellite campuses, legislators asked why he wanted so many campuses in one county. Eissey asked them if they thought it would be preposterous for Rhode Island to have only four campuses. When they said no, Eissey quickly informed them that Palm Beach County was almost twice as large as Rhode Island (it's true, you can look it up).

During a special ceremony on Sept. 14, 1990, the Palm Beach Gardens campus was renamed the Edward M. Eissey Campus, in recognition of his years of service to the College.



1980—Elisabeth Erling appointed vice president of special services, the first woman vice president at the College.

1983—College acquires the first multisystem computer-aided drafting lab in the state of Florida.

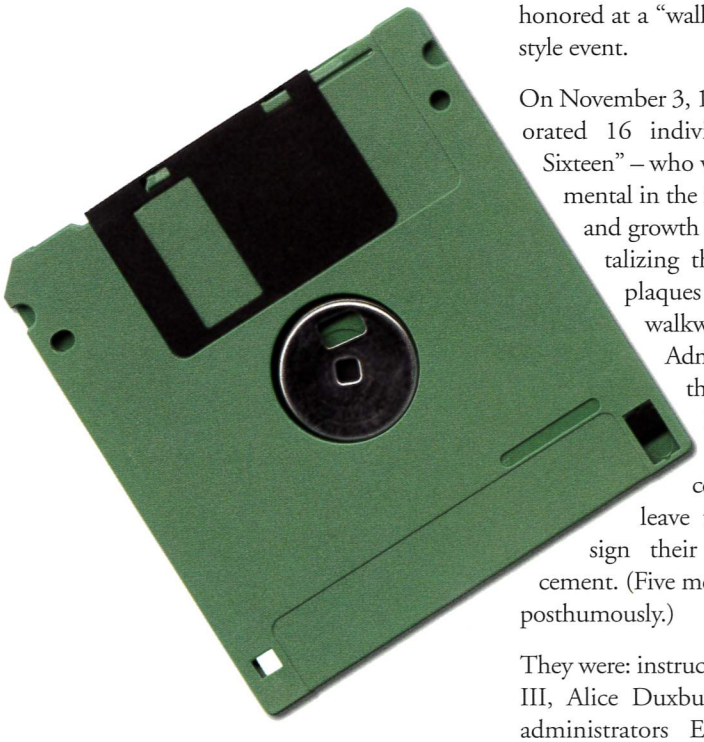
1989—The External Marketing Committee is established to involve community leaders in the process of promoting PBCC and making marketing recommendations.

1990-1999

The 1990s opened with Palm Beach Community College adopting a new look and a new mascot. The Florida panther was adopted to replace the "Pacer" as the official mascot for the College. Also updated were the College's official colors, green and white (replacing green and gold), and a new logo that incorporated a palm tree and the sun.

The "Sacred 16," a change at the top, and the rise of the World Wide Web

PBCC celebrated its 60th anniversary in 1993 and was justifiably proud of the many accomplishments achieved in those six decades. It realized the dream of a college education for thousands of men and women, beginning with a handful of students attending classes in three small rooms of a converted storage building in 1933 to nearly 50,000 students on four campuses sixty years later. In addition to the various campus celebrations and the Black Tie Gala held at the Breakers Hotel in Palm Beach, the College recognized a group of individuals who dedicated themselves to the creation and growth of the cornerstone of Florida's public community college system. That select group of educators, administrators and benefactors were honored at a "walk of fame" Hollywood-style event.



On November 3, 1993, PBCC commemorated 16 individuals – the "Sacred Sixteen" – who were considered instrumental in the founding, development and growth of the College, immortalizing them for all time with plaques set in concrete on the walkway in front of the Administration Building on the Lake Worth campus. Eleven of those individuals attending the ceremony were invited to leave their palm prints and sign their names in the fresh cement. (Five members were recognized posthumously.)

They were: instructors Watson B. Duncan III, Alice Duxbury and Paul Graham; administrators Elisabeth Erling, Paul Glynn and Tony Tate; PBCC co-founders Howell Watkins and Joe Youngblood; presidents John I. Leonard, Harold Manor, Edward Eissey and Britton Sayles; trustees Dolly Hand and Phillip Lichtblau; and community college system directors Lee Henderson and James Wattenbarger.

Digital Firsts

This was the decade that the world was being nudged into the digital age. Tim Berners-Lee, a British computer scientist, introduced the World Wide Web to the public in 1991. Two years later, the first graphical web browser, Mosaic, was released.

As more and more consumers purchased home computers for personal use and web browsing through online service providers such as CompuServe, America Online and Prodigy, the realization grew that an Internet presence was necessary. In 1995, the College launched its first website. A push was on to offer some online continuing education classes and associate degree coursework.

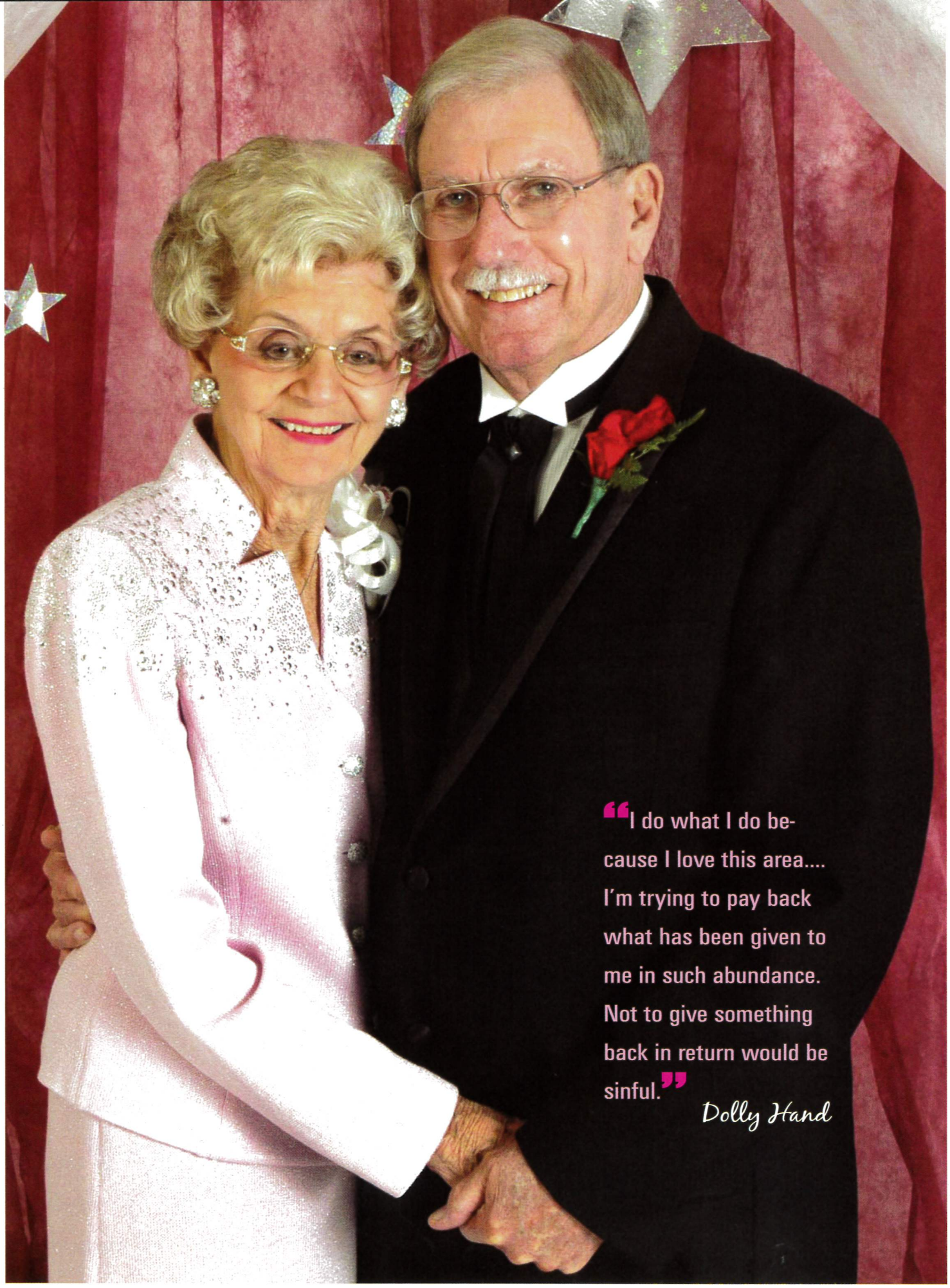
Number 4

After a tenure that spanned three decades, President Edward Eissey announced his retirement in 1996. Following a nationwide search for his successor, the District Board of Trustees selected Dr. Dennis P. Gallon to become the College's fourth president.

PBCC's Walk of Fame faces from top row, left to right:

Watson B. Duncan III
Alice Duxbury
Paul Graham
Elisabeth Erling
Paul Glynn
Tony Tate
Howell Watkins
Joe Youngblood
John I. Leonard
Harold Manor
Edward Eissey
Britton Sayles
Dolly Hand
Phillip Lichtblau
Lee Henderson
James Wattenbarger

Sacred 16



"I do what I do because I love this area.... I'm trying to pay back what has been given to me in such abundance. Not to give something back in return would be sinful."

Dolly Hand

1990-1999 Spotlight

Dolly & Homer Hand

Homer and Dolly Hand and the community of Belle Glade fit together like, well, hand in glove.

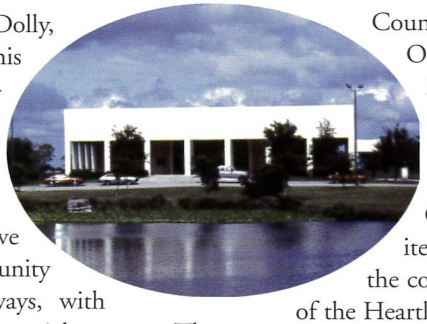
Dolly Hand was born in 1928 in West Palm Beach as Frances Rutledge. Her mother took to calling her "Dolly" because of her frailty as an infant. Her father, Fleming "Slim" Rutledge, was a businessman, hauling ice from West Palm Beach to Belle Glade, later going into real estate. Dolly attended Palm Beach Junior College, rooming with the former principal of Belle Glade High and his wife in Lake Worth. She graduated in 1945, then went on to Stetson University. She was the only woman in her 1949 graduating class and one of the youngest ever to graduate from the College of Law.

"I was much, much younger than any of the other students," she said. "Most of them were returning World War II veterans."

Hand returned to her hometown with plans to work as a lawyer, but when her father died she joined her mother in managing the family's real estate business.

She met her future husband, Homer, at a Clewiston skating rink. They married in 1954.

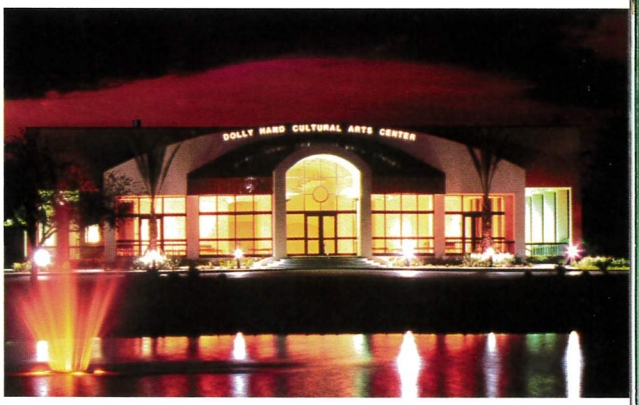
A native of LaBelle, Homer Hand left high school after his junior year and enlisted in the Navy, serving in China and the Philippines at the end of World War II. After he completed his military service, Hand returned home, helping to support his family by working construction. By the time he met Dolly, Hand had earned his high school equivalency diploma and was working as a civil engineer.



Together, they have helped their community in innumerable ways, with education being a special concern. The Hands were instrumental in bringing Palm Beach Community College to the Glades, with the establishment of a permanent campus in 1977. Dolly Hand was a College trustee from 1973 to 1989, with Homer succeeding her, serving on the board from 1987 to 1999. They also played a critical role in raising funds (and making a substantial donation themselves) for the 500-seat performing arts center on campus that bears Dolly's name.

The Hands have given financial help, from scholarships to clothes, to hundreds of college-age students in the western communities. Through their Cultural Arts for Education Series, thousands of elementary school children from Palm Beach County and around Lake Okeechobee come to the Dolly Hand Cultural Arts Center to see live performances. In 1997, then-Governor Lawton Chiles and his wife visited Belle Glade to make the couple the first recipients of the Heartland Award, for "people who exemplify long-term commitment and service to communities." It is one of a long list of honors they've received over the years.

"I do what I do because I love this area, Belle Glade and Palm Beach County," Dolly Hand said. "I'm trying to pay back what has been given to me in such abundance. Not to give something back in return would be sinful."



2000-2013

With a new millennium, the College completes the circle

With the 20th century giving way to the 21st, it seemed Palm Beach Community College was caught between two worlds. Just before Dr. Dennis Gallon arrived to become PBCC's fourth president, most faculty lacked office telephones until interim President Tony Tate had them installed. Students couldn't register for classes by phone or pay by credit card.

There was concern that the College might be lagging in terms of growth and retooling its mission. Community colleges, aided by a change in legislation that permitted them to offer adult vocational programs, were putting more resources into training students for jobs that did not require a college degree but still needed a combination of classwork and professionally taught, hands-on instruction to succeed in a career.

A New Philosophy

One of the reasons that the new president was hired – in fact, it was the tipping point that got him the job – was his philosophy of expanding the role of the College with regard to workforce development. Shortly after his arrival, Gallon began a dialogue with Joan Kowal, Palm Beach County school superintendent, on a proposal by Kowal for PBCC to take over the school district's adult job-training programs. "The magnitude of it is going to cause us to reshape the structure that I had in mind for the College," Gallon said.

The College quickly caught up with, and soon surpassed, its community college brethren. Over a three-year period, PBCC phased in the entire 45 programs of postsecondary adult vocational programs (PSAV). The centerpieces of that transition were the completion of a $25 million, 158,000-square-foot Education and Training Center on the Lake Worth campus and a renovation and expansion of the former gym on the Boca Raton campus to create Boca Tech. The College also expanded its offerings of customized, short-term training programs that would allow area workers to keep up with a rapidly changing workplace. Online course offerings for degree-seeking students increased as well.

Palm Beach County was quickly becoming a magnet for companies in the biotechnology fields, and the College moved to supply highly-trained professionals in that burgeoning industry. The Math & Science Institute, launched in 2008, was created as an academically rigorous program designed to encourage high school and first-year college students to pursue degrees in math, physics, engineering and the biotechnical/environmental sciences.

Faculty and administrators partnered with local biotech companies to create a curriculum that would allow students to follow a degree pathway in their chosen field. Two new state-of-the-art science buildings, the BioScience Technology Complex in Palm Beach Gardens and the Natural Science building on the Lake Worth campus, provide premier settings for studies in these fields.

Expanded Mission, New Name

Beginning in 2001, Florida's two-year colleges were allowed (with approval of the state Board of Education) to create four-year degree programs. The College was approved to launch its first four-year degree program, a Bachelor of Applied Science in Supervision and Management, in 2008. The B.A.S. degree was the first of its kind to be offered by any institution of higher learning in Palm Beach County;

students could choose concentrations in general management, health management or public safety management. The College would soon add two more bachelor's degrees: a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and B.A.S. in information management technology.

With the move from a two-year institution that allowed students to earn an associate degree and transfer to a four-year school to a college that offered its own bachelor degree programs, the push was on to rebrand. After receiving input from community, faculty, staff and students, the District Board of Trustees voted to change the school's name on Sept. 8, 2009. The new name, Palm Beach State College, was officially implemented Jan. 12, 2010.

2000-2013 Spotlight

Dennis P. Gallon

"They" were the Palm Beach Community College District Board of Trustees. The College was in a collective funk when the board convened to select PBCC's fourth president from the nearly 70 applicants for the job. Enrollment had stagnated, and the expansion and building boom the College experienced through the previous three decades had all but subsided. The board wanted to grow its workforce development programs in the hopes of attracting more students wanting to train for a job rather than a transfer degree.

THEY WERE LOOKING FOR A HEALER AS WELL AS A MOTIVATOR. THEY GOT ONE.

"The traditional collegiate approach to education will not be sufficient," the PBCC staff concluded in a report to the trustees. "Rapid response to employer needs and short-term training and job placement are necessary."

Enter Dennis P. Gallon.

Born and raised on his father's 60-acre farm in Monticello, near Tallahassee, Gallon decided early on that farming wasn't his calling; he wanted to be a musician or a teacher. A high school honors student, Gallon majored in business at Edward Waters College in Jacksonville. After receiving his bachelor's degree, he taught math and business at Terry Parker High School, but soon went back to school, earning a master's degree in education at Indiana University and a doctorate in college administration from the University of Florida.

In 1972 he was hired as a business instructor at Florida Community College at Jacksonville. Gallon then became the business manager of FCCJ's Kent Campus, responsible for purchasing, personnel, budget and other functions. He progressed rapidly through the FCCJ hierarchy: dean of occupational, adult and continuing education (1981), dean of instruction (1984), dean of liberal arts and sciences (1986), associate vice president (1989), and finally campus president (1993).

Along the way, Gallon gained a reputation as a hard-working and caring community college administrator, serving on a number of statewide committees and task forces.

"He's one of those few people left in college administration who really cares about the purpose of education," said Kermit Miller, Gallon's boss and mentor at FCCJ. "He cares, he works hard and mainly he believes in people. He cares about students."

In his application to PBCC, Gallon said he would be an effective president because he had a clear vision of a community college's role in the 21st century.

"It should be a vanguard in developing a competent workforce to improve our nation's competitiveness in the global market," he said. "We must find out what the need is. The more specific businesses are, the better able the institution is to meet needs."

Calling it "one of the happiest days of my life," Gallon was named PBCC's fourth president in 1997. At his welcoming ceremony, Gallon asked for everyone's support: "Help me turn our dreams into reality and create a future so glowing that others will want to light their candles at its fire."

"Help me turn our dreams into reality and create a future so glowing that others will want to light their candles at its fire."

Dr. Gallon addresses a standing room only crowd on Jan. 12, 2010, when the institution officially became Palm Beach State College.

The Legacy Continues at Palm Beach State College

Points of Pride

- Palm Beach State College is the largest institution of higher education in Palm Beach County and the sixth largest of the 28 colleges comprising the Florida College System.
- Palm Beach State is ranked by *Community College Week* as the 11th largest producer of associate degrees in the country and the 13th largest producer of associate degrees awarded to minorities. More Palm Beach County high school graduates choose to enroll at Palm Beach State than at any other institution of higher learning.
- Workforce Florida designated Palm Beach State as the Employ Florida Banner Center for Life Sciences, providing training and career advancement solutions for the state's life sciences industry including medical devices, pharmaceutics and biotechnology.
- Palm Beach State is the premier provider of trained health care professionals in Palm Beach County, with more than 20 health sciences programs including nursing, radiography, dental hygiene and surgical technology.
- Palm Beach State provides comprehensive support to businesses and entrepreneurs through its Center for Business and Entrepreneurship, which offers education, counseling, networking opportunities and startup services as the state-designated Small Business Development Center.
- Palm Beach State has the seventh lowest tuition in the nation among public institutions offering four-year or higher degrees, according to the U.S. Department of Education's College Affordability and Transparency Center.
- Palm Beach State was selected by the state of Florida to create and implement the statewide career pathway system for early care and education professionals.
- Through its campus theatres and art galleries, Palm Beach State offers world class performances and exhibits in theatre, dance, music, film and fine arts for students and the community.

www.palmbeachstate.edu

Join our social media sites to find out what's happening now and visit the Palm Beach State College Archives to explore our history.

Belle Glade
1977 College Drive

Boca Raton
3000 Saint Lucie Avenue

Lake Worth
4200 Congress Avenue

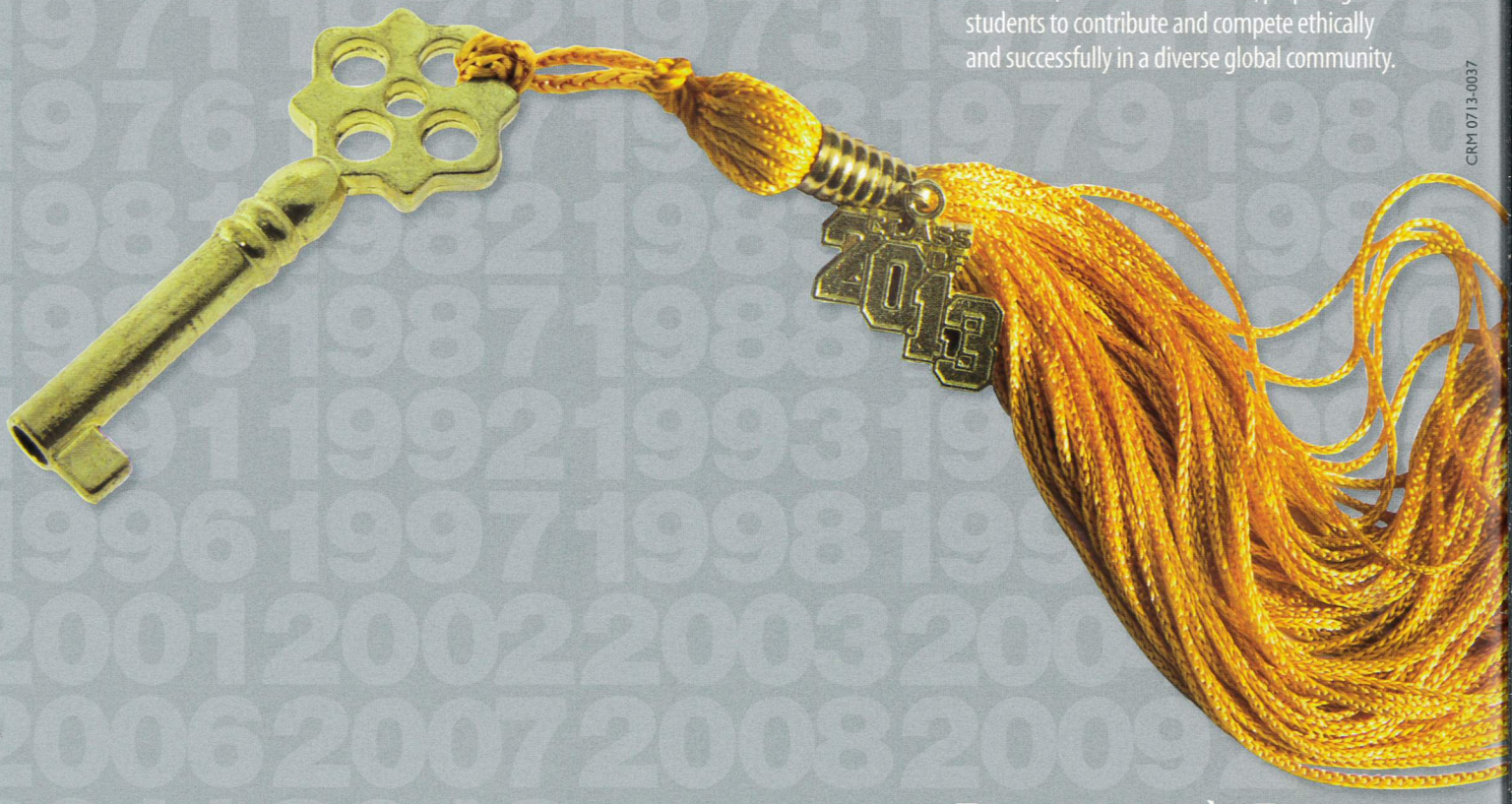
Palm Beach Gardens
3160 PGA Boulevard

PALM BEACH STATE COLLEGE

Mission

Palm Beach State College, founded in 1933 as Florida's first public community college, is a diverse, comprehensive institution dedicated to serving the educational needs of Palm Beach County. Integrally linked to the community through strong partnerships, the College provides associate and baccalaureate degrees, professional certificates, workforce development and lifelong learning.

Palm Beach State College's mission is to create and sustain a dynamic teaching and learning environment that provides a high-quality, accessible, affordable education, preparing students to contribute and compete ethically and successfully in a diverse global community.



CRM 0713-0037

President's Report
80th Anniversary Commemorative Edition